

# [***Kristi Noem Says Killing Dog Was Her 'Choice as a Mom'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BYW-G2S1-JBR6-9000-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Length:** 525 words

**Byline:** Aila Slisco

**Highlight:** The Republican governor insisted that it was her motherly duty to execute the "less than worthless" dog to ensure child "safety."

**Body**

South Dakota Governor [*Kristi Noem*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/kristi-noem?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) has suggested that deciding to personally execute a "dangerous dog" was a choice she had to make "as a mom."

Noem, a [*Republican*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/republican?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) whose name has been floated as a potential 2024 [*running mate*](https://www.newsweek.com/kristi-noem-trump-vice-president-kill-dog-book-1897521?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) of former President [*Donald Trump*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/donald-trump?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), recalls the decision to fatally shoot her 14-month-old pet dog Cricket in her book *No Going Back: The Truth on What's Wrong with* ***Politics*** *and How We Move America Forward,* which is set to be published on Tuesday.

Following a firestorm of [*criticism*](https://www.newsweek.com/kristi-noem-confronted-republican-criticism-shooting-dog-1897459?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) that erupted from both sides of the political aisle when *The Guardian* reported on the story late last month, Noem has gone on the defensive, arguing that she was justified in killing the "less than worthless" and "untrainable" pet because it was "dangerous" and had attacked a family's chickens.

Noem maintained that carrying out the execution was her duty as a mother during a Monday night interview with [*Fox News*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/fox-news?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) host Jesse Watters. She claimed that the "safety" of her children was at risk after [*Watters*](https://www.newsweek.com/fox-news-host-getting-rid-dog-stuns-colleagues-1844202?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) asked how she might handle Vice President [*Kamala Harris*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/kamala-harris?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) questioning why she was "bragging about" killing the dog in a potential vice presidential debate.

"You know, that story was a choice as a mom," said Noem. "The safety of my children versus a dangerous dog that was killing livestock and attacking people. So, this book that I've written is full of stories of my past hard decisions. And I told the truth. And I think that's very different than a lot of politicians we have today."

Noem went on to insist that "everybody's known" that she executed the dog long before it became a national scandal, asserting that "in South Dakota they've used that story to attack me and my political campaigns for years."

"This dog was vicious, it was dangerous, it was killing livestock for the joy of it and attacking people," she added. "And I had a choice between keeping my family safe, I had little kids at the time ... I don't pass my responsibilities off to anybody else."

*Newsweek* reached out for comment to Noem's office via email on Monday night.

The chapter of Noem's book that recalls the dog-killing episode is titled "Bad Day to be a Goat" and also details the governor killing a goat on the same day, supposedly because it had not been castrated, chased children on her farm and "smelled," according to *The Guardian*.

Additionally, the book reportedly contains a passage where Noem imagines herself saying, "Commander, say hello to Cricket"—suggesting that President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/joe-biden?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)'s dog, Commander, should have also been killed.

During an appearance on [*CBS*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/cbs?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)' *Face the Nation* on Sunday, Noem argued that the president "should be held accountable" for not ordering the execution of Commander after the German shepard bit multiple Secret Service agents.

"We find [Noem's] comments from yesterday disturbing, we find them absurd," White House Press Secretary [*Karine Jean-Pierre*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/karine-jean-pierre?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) [*told*](https://twitter.com/therecount/status/1787565155477295169) reporters on Monday. "This is a country that loves dogs, and you have a leader talking about putting dogs down, killing them."

"That's a disturbing statement to say," she continued. "I would say to her [that] she probably should stop digging herself in a hole."

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2388865/kristi-noem-executing-dog-duty-mom.jpg)

**Graphic**

Kristi Noem Executing Dog Duty as Mom

KAMIL KRZACZYNSKI/AFP; John Moore

South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem is pictured in a MAGA hat while speaking at an event with former President Donald Trump in Vandalia, Ohio, on March 16, 2024. The inset image features a German Wirehaired Pointer, a dog of the same breed that Noem admitted to fatally shooting because it was "untrainable" and "less than worthless" in a new book. Noem suggested in a Fox News interview on Monday night that personally executing the 14-month-old pet was her duty "as a mom."

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